"An Essay

on

Dysenteria endemica seu epidemica."

"Respectfully Submitted

To the Faculty

of the

Homoeopathic Medical College

of Pennsylvania,

by

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of Derby, Vermont.

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Dysenteria endemica seu epidemica

There has been, and even now is, much discrepancy in regard to the true nature of this disease, but it would be worse than useless for me to discuss the merits of opinions which perished with their promulgators.

Dysentery properly so-called is an Inflamation of the larger Intestines, the Rectum and Colon, commencing with the mucous coat and attacking the muscular and serous according to the severity of the case, Attending a well marked case, we have the following as the most characteristic symptoms; constant urging at stool, severe colicky pain, evacuation of mucus, of muco-sanguineous dejections, violent tenesmus, hard, quick and wiery pulse, tongue coated white or of a dirty-whitish color, febrile excitement, such as is observed during nearly all inflamations, at times nausea and vomiting.

"Authors writing upon Dysentery, generally speak of various kinds, characterized by the consistence of the evacuations, such as Dysenteria alba, biliosa &c, but to the Homoeopath such divisions are unimportant; since he is called to treat the case as characterized by its symptoms and causes rather than by its name, It may be well to speak of two forms of this disease the Acute, and Chronic, the former differing from the latter by the intensity of its symptoms and by the rapidity of its progress, terminating in resolution or dissolution, or passing into the Chronic form, in from four to seven days, whilst the Chronic form steals on unheeded by the patient for several days, having commenced (as it were) Chronic, or as is the case more frequently, is the sequel of the acute form, the result of ill treatment in all probability."

"Also, we may speak of this disease from the location of its occurrence, and from the extent of its ravages, as being Sporadic when

but an isolated case occurs. which is generally caused directly by excesses or by irregularities on the part of the patient himself. concerning the treatment. of which, nothing need be said. save that a strict regimen must be enjoined. and habits regulated and nothing need be feared as to the result. But when this disease occurs in some particular location we give it the name of Dysenteria endemica. which having spread over an indefinite region becomes epidemic. the latter of which will be the subject of this Essay.

"Knowing as we do of the vital importance of atmospheric air. it is neither marvelous nor wonderful that when it becomes impregnated with poisonous properties. that it should be the cause of much disease and suffering Dysentery is one of many diseases which walks upon the wings of the wind; noiselessly but surely it fastens upon its victims. and unless timely aid be afforded.

Death usually makes sure of his victims.

"The reason why Dysentery attacks or has its primary location in the Intestines, is unknown, but that it does is equally well known. The cause, we say, is some miasm poisoning the atmosphere, but the elements of this poison are unknown, neither will the most skilful Chemist ever be able to analyze it, consequently all speculations will be futile, The time of the appearance of this disease is at the close of the Summer months or at the commencement of Autumnal frosts, after a long and dry season when neither rain nor electricity have assisted in purifying the air, we may expect the outbreak of Dysentery, hot days and cool nights, living in a marsh district, on the banks of small streams or near a pond, favor the attack, But saying that this disease is caused by some miasm we are sometimes interrogated as to the reason why all are not attacked by the disease. We believe all are attacked

with the disease, and nearly simultaneously. Some constitutions being such as are unable to ward off or eradicate disease by the unaided power of the system, consequently are attacked at once. as soon as the air becomes poisonous, others, whose recuperative powers are very active pass on through an Epidemy with apparent health a few will be seen with an indisposition to exercise, with a slight Diarhoea and in a state commonly called 'malaise', plainly indicating that they are affected by the prevailing Epidemic. From the above, we think that the evidence favors the conclusion that all are affected by an Epidemic to a greater or less degree. The question often arises whether this disease is contagious. we believe it is not. Whenever this disease breaks out in any one place or family we often notice that one after another is attacked with the same complaint, and from this circumstance many are led to believe that the disease is contagious. But when we consider the exciting causes of this

Malady, we can at once account for the spreading of Dysentery. Knowing that exciting causes are generally needed to occasion an outbreak, such as irregularities in diet, intemperance in any respect, care, fatigue and anxiety; why should we wonder that the friends of the diseased are also afflicted? and, why should not their disease be the same, knowing that every Epidemic enstamps its image upon all other diseases occurring at the same time? aware of the fact, also that in the treatment of all diseases during an Epidemy we are obliged to administer remidies in view of the then prevailing disease,

"Although we observe many people taken with Dysentery, who have been attendants on the sick of the same disease, they are attacked with Dysentery because they can be attacked with no other, Dysenteria being the ruling disease, holding in its giant grasp all other diseases, consequently it is not contagious, but a room out condition, a predisposition to the prevailing disease of the season or location,

For convenience, we will divide the Acute form into three stages. the stage of Incubation being the first. although at times we see the disease fully developed (as it were) from the commencement the incubative stage being carelessly unheeded. The second stage, being the one characterized by the intensity of the symptoms, the disease having reached its highest, and the third stage may be applied to the change into resolution, death or the Chronic form.

The first stage may be known by the following symptoms; Colicky Pain in the umbilical region; tongue coated white, though at times having a yellow tinge; Diarhoea consisting of mucous mingled with faecal matter; and impaired digestion.

The second stage, has excruciating Colicky Pains, urging constant calls at stool, the dejections consisting of muco-sanguineous discharges with no evacuations of the faeces, complete constipation, tenesmus, furred tongue violent fever and its concomitants, complete prostration and at times delirium.

Third Stage. Cessation of pain, less febrile excitement, pulse soft, the strength is regained and the appetite is restored, bilious evacuations, followed by the Homoeopathic Sleep, and soon health. But not all cases terminate thus favorably. Sometimes the nervous system becomes exhausted, the pulse sinks, coma sets in followed by dissolution. Again, we perceive no action from our medicines although selected with the utmost care, plainly indicating that some latent disease is preying upon and undermining the constitution. The pains may be nearly wanting, dejections not very frequent consisting of mucous, not much fever, but a constant sinking of the vital forces. Such cases cannot be cured unless we first commence the treatment with the Antipsories, selected with the utmost care and discrimination. After which the remedies indicated by the most prominent symptoms will have their wonted effects and the patient will be restored, though time will be required.

This disease may terminate in seven days or it may run on for as many weeks. When becoming Chronic according to the Allopaths it is usually fatal, but not so among the Homoeopaths, whose small long-acting doses with their unfailing curative results, reach every stage and symptom of disease.

℞ The Prognosis is generally favorable when attacking persons of good constitutions and in the prime of life, but more doubtful when among persons at either extreme of life.

℞ Treatment. Much may be done by means of Prophylactics, the most important being a proper Regimen, a simple nutritious diet, pure air, and cleanliness in every respect, temperance in all things no change in diet unless found to disagree, all excesses must be avoided, both Physical and mental, every symptom should be noticed and checked at once,

The principal remedies required in treating Dysentery are the following: Ac. Bell. Mer. corros, and virus. Colo. Ars. China, Nitric Acid, Rhus, Aloes and Veratrum.

"Aconite" is valuable either at the commencement of the attack or as an intermediate remedy, when the febrile symptoms are well marked, pulse hard and bounding, face flushed, congestion to the head, shooting pains in various parts of the body, abdomen swollen and painful to the touch, tongue covered with mucus, the urine red and fiery.

"Bell. will be found useful when the cerebral symptoms predominate, accelerated pulse face bright red, throbbing of the carotids, delirium, sleeplessness, abdomen swollen but not painful, some tenesmus with discharge at times of muco-sanguineous stools.

Mer. Corr. is invaluable when the Abdomen is swollen and painful on contact, the clothes by their weight cause pain, constant urging, at stool with little or no discharge, violent

tenesmus, discharge of mucus or of bilious de-
-jections, cutting- griping pain in the umbilical
region, tongue yellowish white, bitter taste,
no appetite, great thirst.

" Colo. should be used when there are se-
-vere colicky pains, cutting- tearing and bruised
feeling in the abdomen, tenesmus with
nausea, stools very frequent day and night,
consisting of bloody mucus or mucus alone,
pains excited by motion, relieved by bending
forward or by evacuating the bowels.

Ars is indicated by the sad expression
of countenance, sunken features, abdomen dis-
-tended and painful, burning pains in
the abdomen, tenesmus with burning &
pressing of the rectum and anus, slimy
greenish dejections, at times sanguinous.

China, is one of the best remedies when
the patient is very much debilitated by the
loss of fluids, either by the long continuance
of this disease, or when the sequel of some
other disease, and as is sometimes the case

when the patient has been reduced by frequent venesections. China is almost specific when the disease is intermittent in its paroxysms, with cutting colicky pains, evacuations of mucus mingled with faecal matter. Nitric Acid. is useful with patients of fair complexion, spare forms, and disposed to looseness of the bowels, considerable colic and discharge of arterial blood from the rectum. Rhus. tox. is beneficial when the patient is slow of recovery, pulse weak and low, typhoid symptoms set in, and the patient complains of rheumatic pains in the back. Many other remedies might be mentioned among the Antipsorics which will be needed in the Chronic forms, such as Sulphur Graphites, Dul. Hepar, Sul, &c.

The patient should always keep in a horizontal position as it favors convalescence

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